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Training and research

Progress report by the Director of the United Nations Staff College at Turin, Italy

Note by the Secretary-General

In its decision 1999/271 of 28 July 1999, the Economic and Social Council, *inter alia*, invited the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session to hold a discussion on the activities of the United Nations Staff College, including the institutional, administrative and financial aspects, with a view to further considering the question at its fifty-fifth session, on the basis of the recommendations of the Secretary-General on the future status and operations of the College after the conclusion of its pilot phase in December 2000.

In order to support the proposed discussion at the current session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General is transmitting herewith a report by the Director of the Staff College on the aims and current activities of the College.

Pursuant to the decision of the Economic and Social Council and taking into account the outcome of discussions at the current session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Administrative Committee on Coordination, intends to elaborate arrangements that will enable the Staff College to be placed on a more secure and stable footing, beyond the initial project phase which ends in December 2000, and report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

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Training and Learning: The United Nations Staff College Project

Progress Report by the Director of the Staff College

Executive Summary

1. The United Nations Staff College was established in January 1996 to provide training for international civil servants throughout the UN system. Its rationale was to strengthen collaboration within the system in areas that cut across traditional lines of organisational responsibility. The aim was to develop a shared vision for the future and to increase operational effectiveness, enhance cooperation with Member States and NGOs, and create a more cohesive UN system-wide management culture.

2. The Staff College was established initially as a United Nations project with a five-year time span, entrusted for implementation to the International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin, and under the overall guidance and direction of the Secretary-General.

3. The College was conceived as a global network of training centres, academic and professional institutions and located in Turin at the hub of the network. Collaborating closely with the UNU, UNITAR, and other training and research institutes, it would complement existing capabilities by offering multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral training with a system-wide perspective.

4. The main training areas to be covered were:

- International Peace and Security, Human Rights and Humanitarian Emergency Management;
- Co-ordination Training;
- Economic and Social Development; and,
- Management Development and Organisational Change in the UN system.

5. The Staff College is voluntarily funded by UN Member States and UN organisations. In 1998 its total income was US$ 4 million. In 1999 it is estimated at some US$ 7 million. The goal for 2000 is US$ 10 million.

6. In the three and a half years of its existence, over 3,500 middle and senior UN staff have participated in its programmes, with special attention paid to those in key positions of inter-agency concern in development support and related areas, such as Resident Co-ordinators and UN Country Teams.

7. In October 1998 the College undertook a major review and a comprehensive training needs analysis. It has since developed with its UN system partners a new future strategy for design and implementation of training and learning activities focussing on the change and reform process of the UN, especially at the field level. The College has re-defined its strategic direction into four product areas across which programmes and activities are being developed:

- Executive/Learning Fora on issues of global concern
- Learning and Training Workshops in selected areas
- Expert Services
- Networking/Clearing House providing specific support services.

8. The new strategic direction of the Staff College elaborated with its UN system partners and the ACC conclusions referred to in paragraph 21, together with the growing realisation within the system that reform and change require continuous learning, support the view that there is demand, and there will be a continuing need, for a viable, effective UN Staff College in the years ahead. To meet this need, the opportunity of the conclusion of the pilot phase of the College in December 2000 should be seized to give focussed attention to the most suitable arrangements to place the Staff College on a secure and stable footing, in terms both of its status and of its financial basis, so that it can serve on a continuous basis as a distinct system-wide training and learning entity, devoted to fostering a cohesive culture of learning together across the UN system.

Establishment of the UN Staff College

9. On the basis of a feasibility study and inter-agency consultations, the previous Secretary-General announced in January 1996 the establishment of a United Nations Staff College to provide training for international civil servants throughout the system. Programmes were to be aimed at strengthening collaboration within the system in areas that cut across traditional lines of organisational responsibility in order to develop a shared vision for the future and increase operational effectiveness; to enhance cooperation with Member States and Non-Governmental Organisations; and to create a more cohesive system-wide management culture.

10. The focus of the Staff College's activities has been in the areas of international peace and security; coordination; economic and social development; and management for organisational change.

11. The College was conceived initially as a United Nations project with a five-year time span, entrusted for implementation to the International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin, under the overall guidance and direction of the Secretary-General. It was envisaged that there should be a step-by-step approach, building on existing expertise and facilities, without the creation of heavy new institutional arrangements. The College would not be a single institution, but rather a global network of training centres, academic and professional institutions, with a small management team in Turin at the hub of the network.

12. Not only would the College benefit from the International Training Centre of the ILO's existing institutional capacity and build on its experience and infrastructure but It was also intended that there would be close collaboration with UNU, UNITAR, and other research and training institutes within and outside the system. The College could open its activities to governmental and non-governmental organisations who are partners in United Nations system activities. Importantly, the College would not duplicate, or substitute for, programmes carried out by organisations of the system, but rather complement existing capabilities by offering multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral training with a system-wide perspective.

13. The College was set up with some 15 staff, including professional staff on secondment from several UN organisations. Funding is provided from two sources: income derived from course fees and voluntary contributions from Member States, the authorities in Turin and limited private sector assistance.

14. An Advisory Board, comprising prominent personalities from within the UN system, academia and public and private organisations, was constituted to provide substantive leadership as well as advice in programme development, network design and resource mobilisation.

Experience to Date

15. Since its inception, over 3,500 middle and senior UN staff have participated in the College's programmes, special attention having been paid to those in key positions of inter-agency concern in development support and related areas, such as Resident Co-ordinators and UN Country Teams.

16. Activities are implemented in the field, at the location of UN organisations and in Turin. Participants are primarily senior UN officials but key partners from government, the private sector, civil society and other international organisations who are critical to the delivery of the UN system's activities are also involved in Staff College programmes. Training activities are of varying duration and range from policy-oriented workshops, process-focused, team-oriented workshops, open workshops and the design and development of training packages. About 80 per cent of the activities have been in direct response to requests from clients, the remainder having been initiated by the College in key areas, particularly those emerging from the Secretary-General's reforms and global conferences.

17. The College's training and learning programmes have been developed as follows:

Economic and Social Development

Activities in these areas exposed UN system staff to new ideas, approaches, concepts and management tools often with emphasis on the major substantive themes of global conferences. UN/Business collaboration, gender and economic policy reform

workshops are examples. Training in the area of management of the development process focussed on concepts and tools such as programme and project cycle management, monitoring and evaluation, policy analysis and strategic planning, including a CCPOQ-initiated training programme on national capacity strengthening in the management of development.

Co-ordination Training

This programme sought to foster effective coherence of purpose and collaboration among UN managers (Resident Co-ordinators and Senior UN field representatives) through its programme of co-ordination training, again including a CCPOQ-initiated series of workshops on management of field coordination. The programme also offers orientation and induction for entry-level UN staff (e.g. Junior Professional Officers and Associate Experts).

International Peace and Security, Human Rights and Humanitarian Emergency Management

The Staff College has conducted a combination of joint training and learning on key issue areas of the crisis environment, specifically cross-sectoral and multi-dimensional aspects of international peace and security. Activities include Human Rights Reporting workshops, training courses for military and civilian police trainers and, more recently, a pilot project designed to strengthen the UN system's capacity in the area of early warning and preventive measures.

Management Development and Organisational Change in the UN system

This area was aimed at strengthening management competencies in the context of organisational transformation by exposing participants to best practice. Use of New Training Technologies, including Distance Learning techniques, are being introduced to help expand the outreach to the global UN system. Workshops have been carried out on team building and other management skills.

18. Further details of these activities are provided in the annex. Training and learning in these fields seek to promote and foster key skills and attributes such as co-operation, co-ordination, and teamwork, cross-sectoral and multi-dimensional outlooks and approaches,

operational efficiency and effectiveness, and competency-raising knowledge acquisition and techniques across the UN system.

Re-defining the Strategic Direction

19. The constant search for efficiencies, relevance and activities which fully meet the changing needs of the UN system led, in 1998, to a comprehensive review by the College of its organisation, management and programmes. A process of system-wide consultations, including a UN Training Needs Analysis which the College conducted in Turin in October 1998 with a wide range of UN partners, was initiated.

20. This detailed examination of the Staff College and its role confirmed that the College's original mandate remained valid. It also confirmed the requirement for a clear view of the future strategic direction and for an action plan to take the strategy forward. As a consequence, the following key strategic criteria were established:

- Increased emphasis on reform-related activities designed to train UN staff through shared learning and innovative approaches to human resource development. Facilitate training in a system-wide perspective and to common standards which help to create greater UN agency coherence, unity, coordination and better partnerships. The overall goal is improving UN performance and effectiveness.
- Greater emphasis on the College's role as a central UN network or clearing house which facilitates and convenes development of best practice in the College's mandated areas. Become a centre of excellence with a data-base, researching product development within and outside the UN. Service the UN system in these areas as the hub of a network of global learning institutions through the provision of support services to training interventions in the system. The advocacy role of the College was seen as a key element.
- The College should do a few things but do them well, ensuring that its services are demand driven, of high quality and cost-effective. Comparative advantage and niche role are crucial. The aim should be to facilitate shared learning by designing state of the art learning/training modules in the main cross-cutting areas (identified

in the Track I and II reforms) for application in major UN centres and at regional and sub-regional levels in developing countries.

- Ensure the College's existing distance learning capacity is developed in a new strategy which, feeding into the business plan, focuses on integration of distance learning techniques into all College programmes as a means of training/learning delivery, on identification and dissemination of distance learning best practice (clearing house function) and on project development when requested by UN agencies.
- The College should pay particular attention to initiatives on training in the Secretary-General's priority areas, such as peace-keeping, the Resident Coordinator System and communication.

21. Having validated its continuing mandate and considered in depth the main elements of the College's new strategic direction, the October 1998 UN Needs Analysis Meeting also recommended that these important conclusions be brought to the attention of the ACC. Consequently, the role of the Staff College in the context of a changing UN was considered in the preparation for the ACC meeting held on 30 and 31 October 1998 as follows:

> *"Responsiveness to a rapidly changing international environment by the organisations of the system must be accompanied by steps to develop a system-wide culture, geared to reform and the management of change, and to enhancing the collective capacity of the system to address the new cross-sectoral challenges before the international community. The Staff College provides an inter-agency instrument specially suited to furthering these objectives."*

22. Derived from the new strategic direction described above, an action plan has been developed in order to implement the following priority activities:

- Seeking more broad based UN system participation in and support for Staff College training and learning activities;
- Producing more accurate and complete assessments of training needs, particularly in the context of broader institutional processes of change and reform;
- Improving the quality of training materials;
- Reviewing the policy on the selection of resource persons;
- Strengthening in-house expertise on content and methodologies;

- Producing more timely programme evaluations and follow-up;
- Price and costs managed and controlled according to circumstances ;
- Developing a corporate plan for the period 1999 – 2000;
- Developing a new resource mobilisation strategy;
- Developing a new external relations strategy.

23. Work is well in hand with these activities and, in particular, a Corporate Plan for the period 1999-2000 has been developed. The College's mandate has also been re-defined as follows:

"The Staff College is facilitating strategic change by supporting the evolving vision of a new United Nations and by building on the talents of all its staff".

The College's aims and strategy for delivering this mandate can be summarised as:

Aims	Strategy
♦ Helping to strengthen the UN's performance; ♦ Promoting a common UN management culture; ♦ Meeting cross-agency training and learning needs.	♦ Building partnerships in the UN; ♦ Developing innovative ways of learning and working together; ♦ Sharing existing knowledge and best practice; ♦ Networking with civil society, the private sector and national counterparts.

Future Product Areas

24. As in the past, the training and learning activities of the Staff College will continue to respond to demand generated from within the UN system and its priorities. This does not mean, however, that all training and learning needs of the UN system either can or will be met by the Staff College. The concentration will be on activities that are designed to meet uniquely UN system requirements that neither will nor can be satisfied by other training and learning institutions, public or private, national or international.

25. Those requirements are reflected in the strategic objectives and in the following four product areas across which activities are now grouped and which are based on the conclusions of the UN Training Needs Analysis.

- ***Executive/Learning Fora***: For exchange and sharing of experience on current issues of importance with resource persons serving as facilitators.
- ***Learning and Training Workshops***: Participants acquire competencies and knowledge in both process and content, through a variety of learning techniques using principles of adult learning.
- ***Expert Services***: Customised, specific interventions based on requests from clients, limited in scope and part of a broader process.
- ***Networking/Clearing house***: Sharing of services and value-added information on learning and training, such as inventory of training/learning events, materials and expertise.

26. A new series of programmes derived from the above product areas and identified through further extensive consultation with the UN system over the last year is being developed. The main elements include management of organisational change; organisations' competencies; training and learning support to the UN system; strengthening the Resident Coordinator System; peace, security and human rights; and induction/orientation training.

27. The programme also includes a number of innovative pilot projects with a significant Training of Trainers component and designed to strengthen the UN system's capacity in the development field. Examples are Early Warning and Preventive Measures, Distance Learning and Population, and UN Partnerships, concentrating initially on building partnerships between the UN and business. Some of these projects have already secured significant funding from UN Member States and the UN Foundation. The focus of all these activities is the field level, system-wide relevance and in support of the changing UN culture.

Future Resources

28. Over the last twelve months the College's resource mobilisation efforts have resulted in increased financial and human resources. From an income of some US$ 4 million in 1998, this is expected to rise to over US$ 7 million in 1999, reflecting substantial new donor contributions, including the UN Foundation and increases from Member States. This

enhanced support for the Staff College, if maintained, suggests that annual income could increase further. The College has, therefore, set a target of US$ 10 million by the end of the year 2000. Whilst the College's programmes continue to operate on the basis of full cost-recovery, the income derived from them is, as yet, insufficient to finance the College's annual running costs. Thus, the College will continue to rely on voluntary general funding until its programme and funding base is sufficient to meet its running costs. The long-term goal is sustainable financial viability through a combination of fees and funding for specific programmes.

29. Crucially important to this developing resource position is increased investment in the Staff College by UN organisations. In addition to the existing in-kind contributions from UNDP and UNFPA, other organisations such as UNESCO, UNIDO and UNICEF have agreed to provide staff on loan. These contributions have enabled the College to expand to a total of some 25 staff its human resource base and to enrich its skills and experience, including new staff members with private sector experience. Moreover, UN organisations are now more involved in the design and delivery of the College's programmes. The College has also developed, through consultation with the Chiefs of Learning of UN organisations, a scheme under which these organisations will provide an annual financial subscription for services delivered by the College. Several agencies have already agreed to participate in this scheme.

UN Partnerships

30. These developments signal a strengthening of collaboration between the UN system and the Staff College. Integral to this process is a clear understanding of the division of labour between other UN training institutions, especially UNITAR, and the College. Given their different mandates, the guiding principle is that the Staff College focus is on training officials of the UN system whilst the UNITAR focus is on Member States. At the same time there are areas where joint training of UN officials and partners is required and where both institutions can work together to build on their respective strengths.

31. Participation in relevant training activities is already in hand and new ways of collaboration are being examined. Officials from both UNITAR and the UNU have

participated in the College's Early Warning and Preventive Measures pilot project. Involving UNITAR staff in the design of relevant College activities is also being pursued. There are a number of areas of potential collaboration with the UNU, for example, with the International Leadership Academy in Jordan which the Staff College Director will visit later this year following a recent visit to Turin by the Director of the ILA.

32. Working with other partners, such as the World Bank, academic institutions, NGO's and the private sector, is also being developed. Agreements have been signed with several academic institutions. An internship programme with Bocconi University in Milan is, for example, being revived and new internship opportunities being pursued with UNITAR.

33. Meanwhile, the Staff College continues to work closely in the same spirit with the International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin. Among joint activities is the development, by the Staff College and the Centre, of a training module for system-wide use in the area of UN procurement.

34. Finally, the Staff College has strengthened its involvement in the work of key inter-agency bodies such as CCPOQ, CCAQ and UNDGO and their various training sub-groups. This relationship has helped to enhance the process of UN system-wide consultation, policy formulation, and oversight of the Staff College and its training and learning activities for the system.

Beyond 2000

35. The Staff College is putting considerable effort into the search for excellence, not least through a constant process of client consultation and feedback. Its new monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are fundamental, not only to the achievement of its strategic objectives but also to the design and delivery of every single activity.

36. The new strategic direction of the Staff College elaborated with its UN system partners and the ACC conclusions referred to in paragraph 21, together with the growing realisation within the system that reform and change require continuous learning, support the view that there is demand, and there will be a continuing need, for a viable, effective UN Staff College

in the years ahead. To meet this need, the opportunity of the conclusion of the pilot phase of the College in December 2000 should be seized to give focussed attention to the most suitable arrangements to place the Staff College on a secure and stable footing, in terms both of its status and of its financial basis, so that it can serve on a continuous basis as a distinct system-wide training and learning entity, devoted to fostering a cohesive culture of learning together across the UN system.

UN Staff College
Turin, September 1999

Uniting Nations by Learning Together

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

		No. Activities	No. Participants
Economic and Social Development	96	21	211
	97	26	337
	98	27	518
	Tot	**74**	**1066**

Examples of activities:

1. Business/United Nations Collaboration for Development – Joint Action Programme;
2. Expert workshop on Gender;
3. In-country workshop on Governance and Democratisation in Mongolia;
4. Economic Policy Reform in Developing Countries and the Role of International Institutions;
5. In-country workshop on Programme Approach (Botswana, Sierra Leone).

Co-ordination	96	11	379
	97	16	385
	98	8	160
	Tot	**35**	**924**

Examples of activities:

1. Best Practices in the Functioning of the Resident Co-ordinator System and Related Mechanisms;
2. 3 yearly Field Co-ordination workshops for Senior UN System Representatives and Related Follow-up workshops;
3. Induction and Orientation for Italian JPOs/AEs.

International Peace and Security	96	6	123
	97	12	247
	98	6	108
	Tot	**24**	**473**

Examples of activities:

1. Strategic Framework: Applied Training Intervention for Countries in Crisis. In-country Applied Training Mission to Afghanistan;
2. Human Rights Reporting: National Capacity Strengthening;
3. United Nations Training Course for Military Trainers and Civilian Police Trainers: Peacekeeping Human Rights and Humanitarian Assistance;
4. Democratisation, Human Rights and Governance. A training course for Uzbekistan.

Management for Organisational Change and Distance Learning	96	8	297
	97	9	191
	98	14	185
	Tot	**31**	**673**

Examples of activities:

1. Leading for Partnership: Resident Co-ordinator Competencies in the New UN;
2. Workshop for UN Chiefs of Learning;
3. Management Training and Team Building for UNCTAD officials;
4. Time Management Planning.

1996	**46**	**1010**
1997	**63**	**1160**
1998	**55**	**971**
Grand Total	**164**	**3141**